AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE UNDER 37 CFR § 1.111
Serial Number: 09/527974
Filing Date: October 6, 2003
Title: AUTOMATIC REMOTE FIRMWARE UPGRADE

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IN THE CLAIMS

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Please amend the claims as follows:

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1.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system comprising the following:

firmware associated with the ~~imaging~~ printing system;

a communications device adapted and constructed to facilitate communication between the ~~imaging~~ printing system and a remote source of information; and

an automatic remote firmware update mechanism adapted to selectively and automatically retrieve firmware upgrade information from the remote source of information via the communications device, and to selectively and automatically install the firmware upgrade information into the firmware of the ~~imaging~~ printing system.

2.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 1, wherein the automatic remote firmware update mechanism comprises a part of firmware installed in the ~~imaging~~ printing system.

3.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 1, wherein the communications device is selected from a group consisting of a modem and a network interface card.

4.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 3, wherein the communication device further comprises means for connecting to, and accessing information from, a web site.

5.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 1, further comprising the following:

flag means for storing a value corresponding to an update trigger parameter;

flag parameter update means for incrementally increasing the update trigger parameter in response to a sensed condition; and

trigger means for actuating the automatic remote firmware update mechanism to automatically retrieve firmware upgrade information when the update trigger parameter reaches a predetermined update value.

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6.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 5, wherein the flag parameter update means incrementally increases the update trigger parameter value in response to page count through the imaging system.

7.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 5, wherein the flag parameter update means incrementally increases the update trigger parameter value in response to the passage of a predetermined amount of time.

8.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 5, further comprising means for periodically checking the update trigger parameter.

9.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 1, further comprising means for comparing downloaded firmware upgrade information to existing firmware to determine the necessity of installing the downloaded firmware upgrade information.

10.   (Currently Amended) ~~An imaging~~ A printing system according to claim 1, further comprising means for notifying a system user when firmware is to be upgraded.

11.   (Currently Amended) In ~~an imaging~~ a printing system including firmware and a communications device adapted and constructed to facilitate communication between the imaging device and a remote source of information, a method of updating firmware comprising the following ~~steps~~:
        selectively and automatically retrieving firmware upgrade information from the remote source of information via the communications device; and
        selectively installing the firmware upgrade information into the firmware of the ~~imaging~~ printing system.

12.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11, wherein ~~the step of~~ retrieving firmware upgrade information comprises retrieving firmware upgrade information from a web site.

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13.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising the following ~~steps~~:

storing a value corresponding to an update trigger parameter;

sensing a condition;

incrementally increasing the update trigger parameter in response to the sensed condition; and

actuating the automatic remote firmware update mechanism to automatically retrieve firmware upgrade information when the update trigger parameter reaches a predetermined update value.

14.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 13, wherein ~~the step of~~ sensing a condition comprises sensing page count through the ~~imaging~~ printing system, and the step of incrementally increasing the update trigger parameter comprises incrementally increasing the update trigger parameter value in response to page count through the imaging system.

15.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 13, wherein ~~the step of~~ sensing a condition comprises sensing the passage of time, and the step of incrementally increasing the update trigger parameter comprises incrementally increasing the update trigger parameter value in response to the passage of a predetermined amount of time.

16.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 13, further comprising ~~the step of~~ periodically checking the update trigger parameter.

17.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising ~~the step of~~ comparing downloaded firmware upgrade information to existing firmware to determine the necessity of installing the downloaded firmware upgrade information.

18.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising ~~the step of~~ notifying a system user when firmware has been upgraded.

19.   (Original) A printer comprising the following:

firmware installed in the printer;

a telecommunications device adapted and constructed to facilitate communication between the printer and a web site containing firmware upgrade information; and

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an automatic remote firmware update mechanism adapted to selectively and automatically retrieve firmware upgrade information from the web site via the telecommunications device, and to selectively and automatically install the firmware upgrade information into the firmware of the printer.

20.　(Original)　A printer according to claim 19, wherein the automatic remote firmware update mechanism adapted to selectively and automatically download firmware update image files from the web site.